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COMMUNIST CHINA: The pattern of personnel appointments evident as the provincial parties are being rebuilt strongly suggests that the regime is reluctant to tamper with leadership alignments hammered out during the Cultural Revolution.

The top leadership in the majority of the 13 provincial party committees which Peking has certified since last December follows closely that of the provinces' corresponding "revolutionary committees"--the new governing bodies set up during the Cultural Revolution. Many of the leaders involved were at odds in the politically turbulent 1967-68 period, and their appointments to the revolutionary committees--which frequently followed months of agonizing debate--were often the product of seemingly fragile compromise solutions worked out in Peking. By simply confirming these officials as the new local party chiefs, Peking apparently is seeking to avoid rekindling the personal and factional rivalries that marked the formation of the revolutionary committees.

To date, this practice has produced some anomalies; a number of officials who have acquired leading posts at the national level since 1968 are still holding on to authoritative positions at the local level. This almost certainly reflects in part a desire by these officials to maintain their regional bases of power. It also attests, however, to the regime's inability or unwillingness to come to grips with the problem of finding successors to them at the local level.

In northwest China, for example, Liu Hsien-chuan was named first secretary of the Tsinghai provincial party committee on 15 March despite the fact that he moved up to an important post in Peking in the spring of 1968 and has not appeared publicly in his old bailiwick for nearly three years. Similarly, the new director of the general political department,

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Li Te-sheng, was appointed first party secretary in Anhwei in east China this January even though he spends nearly all his time in Peking performing his other presumably more pressing tasks as the army's top commissar.

Rigid adherence to the pecking order established in the provinces during the Cultural Revolution is also evident in the unusual treatment accorded an alternate politburo member who was recently given a provincial party post below several ordinary central committee members in the local hierarchy. His failure to move up to the top party post in the province is a clear departure from long-standing party practice and, so far as is known, has no parallel in China or any other Communist country.

Peking will not be able to evade indefinitely, however, certain provincial leadership problems for which there appears no convenient solution. One of these is in Peking city, where the regime has yet to designate a new party chief, apparently because the situation within the politburo is still so unsettled that the regime is reluctant to take a step which would confirm the purge of Hsieh Fu-chih, the Peking municipal boss and politburo member who has been out of public view for a year.

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CHILE: President Allende and his backers are intensifying their charges that there is a "seditious plot" to frustrate the Chilean revolution.

At a Socialist Party plenum on 14 March, Allende and party secretary general Altamirano charged that an "international and internal conspiracy" exists and asked Chileans to resist it with force if necessary. Allende said that he would soon publicize documentary proof of a "plot," citing other "evidence," including an alleged sales maneuver to drive down copper prices on the world market and make Chileans appear unable to take over their own copper operations and sales.

Altamirano was more vehement, claiming that the cancellation of the visit of the US carrier Enterprise, the alleged arming of rightist Chilean groups, "interference" by the Supreme Court president, and impeachment proceedings against government officials all were inspired by domestic and "imperialist" plotters.

Allende's problems in gaining control of and managing Chile's important economic levers and maintaining access to the external capital market have sharpened the government's tendency to suspect the US of economic maneuvers against it. The recent suspension of credit to Chilean banks by eight US banks, and other developments such as increasing pressure for short-term working capital by US firms operating in Chile, are seen by Allende and his officials as part of a general plot.

In his speech Allende warned that enemies are aiming to discredit his government's image with an eye to the 4 April municipal elections. He reportedly believes that his coalition must win a majority in those elections in order to justify the acceleration of its program.

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FRANCE: Analysis of the first round of nationwide municipal elections held on Sunday shows that the over-all voting pattern remains relatively stable, although the Gaullists registered slight gains.

The results confirmed that Frenchmen tend to vote for administrators of proven ability in local elections. The stability in voting patterns was reflected in part in the abstention rate--about 25 percent--almost identical to that in the 1965 municipal elections. More significant is the fact that in the 193 cities with over 30,000 inhabitants, 103 out of the 109 councils elected on the first ballot returned the outgoing slate.

The Gaullists, who with their supporters received 50.5 percent of the votes cast, did make some progress in strengthening their grass-roots support. This success was slightly more visible in Paris, where there was a clear-cut confrontation between the left, including the Communists, and the Gaullists. Although results from the 14 Paris wards were inconclusive, the Gaullists are in a favored position for the run-off ballot next Sunday in nine of these wards. The government also received a boost from the fact that 23 of the 36 cabinet members who ran won on the first ballot and only one, a state secretary, was defeated.

With the disappearance of De Gaulle from the scene, the Gaullists have been all the more aware of the need to increase their power at the local level. Their grass-roots strength has never been commensurate with the power they wield on the national scene. The slight gains which they have made thus far should improve their position as they look toward the 1973 national legislative elections--the first they will face without De Gaulle's coattails to ride on.

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The leftist parties held their own in the first round, but failed to increase the considerable power they already hold on the local level. They had hoped to capitalize on the obvious dissatisfaction of many Frenchmen with the government over such issues as inflation, strikes, a rising unemployment rate, and police injustice.

The Communists succeeded, however, in forming pre-election coalitions with Socialists in more large towns than ever before. Further coalitions may help the leftists improve their position in the final results.

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UGANDA: The military government is having difficulty re-establishing public order.

Discipline is still a problem within the Ugandan armed forces in particular. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the persecution of officers and men from the Acholi tribe--which has been disproportionately represented in the armed forces--is continuing. On 12 March, 28 military personnel, mostly Acholi, were removed from the main prison, supposedly for interrogation, but were never returned. In another area of the country reprisals against the Acholi have now reached down to the NCO level. The reprisals are reportedly mainly the work of the Baganda tribe, who are settling scores dating back to the coup of 1966 when the Acholi and others in the armed forces ruthlessly suppressed a Baganda uprising.

The incidence of lawlessness is on the rise in the Kampala area, and some Acholi leaders are concerned that the Baganda will use the occasion of the return for burial of the Baganda traditional king, who died in exile following the coup of 1966, to exact more revenge. [REDACTED]

Amin so far has seemed unwilling or unable to restore order. Although these outbreaks do not appear to pose a direct threat to his government, Amin is likely to find it increasingly difficult to establish a government popular throughout the country. [REDACTED]

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LIBYA: Oil companies have been given until tomorrow to respond to the latest Libyan position on oil revenues.

Libyan Oil Minister Mabruk [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] indicated that a five-year agreement was acceptable but insisted that the permanent portion of the companies' posted price offer--in contrast to the temporary portion covering freight charges--be substantially increased. He said the Libyans had considered some form of nationalization or embargo yesterday, but were sufficiently encouraged by recent discussions with the oil companies to postpone any action until Thursday. Oil company representatives are going to London to meet with their principals.

The oil ministers of Iraq, Algeria, Libya, and Saudi Arabia have agreed upon the price minimum each country will accept from the oil companies. The ministers' joint communiqué does not commit Iraq, Saudi Arabia, or Algeria to support Libya's other demands actively. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Algerians encouraged the Libyans to nationalize at the ministerial meeting and to use retroactive payments as partial compensation. The Libyans apparently have decided against this action for the time being and continue to seek a negotiated settlement. [REDACTED]

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CEYLON: The government has declared a full state of emergency. Prime Minister Bandaranaike is worried by the growth of a revolutionary self-styled "Che Guevarist" movement on the island. Following the attack on 6 March on the US Embassy by more than 100 extremists, she invoked partial emergency powers, citing as one reason, without further explanation, "information available to the government." The Ceylonese press on 16 March reported that an alleged attempt to kidnap a cabinet minister had been foiled by the police. [REDACTED]

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TURKEY: The Turkish military high command apparently is taking steps to neutralize all remaining dissident elements within the armed forces, especially those that have previously been involved in alleged plotting activities. Yesterday General Tagmac, chief of the Turkish General Staff, "forcibly retired" five general officers. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] eight or nine colonels and a "larger number" of middle- and junior-grade officers are also being summarily dismissed. Although such a purge is to be expected under prevailing conditions, it increases the danger that some threatened group might attempt a coup in desperation. The widespread military alert, however, should discourage any such maverick group or enable the armed forces to quash any coup attempt outside the chain of command. [REDACTED]

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SIERRA LEONE: Prime Minister Stevens reportedly is being urged by extremist advisers to change Sierra Leone's constitution unilaterally. Opposition to proposed constitutional changes last fall provoked a crisis that led to the declaration of a state of emergency. Stevens' efforts to replace the current parliamentary system with an executive presidency thus far have been frustrated by an elaborate procedure for amending the constitution and by political opponents who see it as a step toward one-man rule. The issue remains a divisive one for most Sierra Leoneans, and armed forces commander Bangura, albeit a weak reed in previous showdowns with Stevens, has said privately he will intervene if the prime minister acts illegally. [REDACTED]

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BOLIVIA: Cabinet shifts that have been rumored for several weeks may be imminent, according to press sources. Interior Minister Gallardo yesterday stated that changes were to be made to effect a "political restructuring" in the country. No official statement has been issued thus far, but cabinet posts reportedly will be given to the leftist National Revolutionary Movement, currently the strongest political party. Military representation reportedly will be kept to a minimum. [REDACTED]

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CHILE: The Allende government has taken over the operation of two large copper mines in which Chile has a majority interest of 51 percent and the US-owned Anaconda Copper Company 49 percent. The intervention yesterday was made on the grounds of production irregularities. Production has fallen below projected levels this year. Labor unrest and inefficiency are probably the cause of the production shortfall, but the government has chosen instead to blame the US copper companies. [REDACTED]

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